

Handling/ Release Guidelines

PELAGIC LONGLINE GEAR



Marine Mammals

Stand by with an Identity Guide, paper and camera.

Document as much information as possible to describe the marine mammal, particularly physical appearance and potential injuries, and take several photographs from different angles.

DOCUMENT:

- animal's length.
- animal's features to be used for species identification from the Guide.
- any gear that could not be removed from the animal (type, placement, color, size, etc.).
- any existing tags on the animal (description, number).

Large Whales:

If a large whale is alive and on the line, immediately contact the Center for Coastal Studies Disentanglement Hotline at: (800)900-3622 or US Coast Guard: VHF Ch. 16 for instructions.

Small Marine Mammals (dolphin to pilot whale size):

- Alert crew to standby the rail, their assistance will be needed. Two long gaffs should be used to recover the opposite side of the mainline as soon as it is available.
- Proceed cautiously and smoothly and STOP vessel within range of the marine mammal.
- Gently bring the marine mammal alongside.
- If a tangle exists, gaff the other side of mainline and attach it to the vessel or float ball in order to isolate the vessel and the marine mammal from any tension on the remaining gear in the water.
- Work tangle off the marine mammal as smoothly and quickly as possible. Avoid abrupt actions that may panic the animal. When a hook is involved, if possible cut off the barb of the hook with long handled bolt cutters, and then cut the line as close to the hook as possible.
- Remove all line from the marine mammal.
- After the animal has been released, secure the remainder of gear in the water, and then promptly record all pertinent information concerning this interaction on your **Marine Mammal Reporting Form**.

Move!

The data show that if you have one marine mammal interaction, there is a high risk that you will have additional encounters if you remain fishing in the same area. Alert others via radio communication, and MOVE rather than risk further interactions.

